

243

7 October 1970

SPECIAL MILITARY SITUATION/ANALYSIS REPORT

Seventeen days remain before the Chilean congressional run-off. At this juncture, President Frei and the highest levels of the Armed Forces appear unwilling or unable to pull themselves together to block Allende. The Chilean military's tradition of non-intervention, Frei's reluctance to tarnish his historical image, General Schneider's firm constitutional stand, and most importantly, the general lack of leadership within the government and military, mitigate against a military takeover. Even though Frei and the military are not enthusiastic about turning the government over to a Marxist, they have not been able to find a solution to stopping Allende.

At the present time, only one military leader of national stature, General Roberto Viaux, appears committed to denying Allende the Presidency by force. Recent reporting indicates that Viaux is planning to launch a golpe before 24 October. He reportedly has received pledges of support from a number of officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Carabineros;

[REDACTED] agrees with Viaux on what needs to be done." In addition, Viaux has been receiving financial support from Alessandristas,

[REDACTED] Recently, General Viaux unsuccessfully approached the [REDACTED] requesting arms and ammunition for an uprising.

General Viaux is the only military leader of any stature who is conspicuously prepared to act, but as a result of the nearly successful Tacna coup of last year, he was retired and no longer has a troop command. Nevertheless, he has the respect of a large number of the non-commissioned officers.

If Viaux attempts a coup on 9 or 10 October as planned, the military leadership might be reluctant to move against him. They do not look forward to an Allende presidency and would probably welcome a move to deny him the office -- as long as they do not have to participate themselves. If the military sits on its hands, (as we suspect they might,) then considerable muscle would probably not be required to takeover the government. General Schneider might be the only one who would put up a fight.

Approved for Release  
July 2000

Because Viaux's cooperation may be useful and perhaps necessary for our objectives in the future, the Station has been advised to do everything possible to prevent a premature coup. If Viaux moves anyway and is unsuccessful (which is a distinct possibility) it would probably make any subsequent Agency military effort more difficult. Should Viaux fail, other possibilities may open up which we could hopefully exploit. For example, even an unsuccessful coup attempt might provoke Allende's forces to over-react, causing violence, demonstrations, and civic disorder which might necessitate military counter-action. Such a development could provide Frei and the military with an opportunity and excuse to intervene to block Allende.

One final consideration concerning a Viaux coup: Viaux may find it much easier to replace Frei's government than maintain order and stability afterwards. To minimize post-coup disorder and instability the present military leadership may have to close ranks with Viaux.